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**SECTION:** NUTRITION EDUCATION

**SUBJECT:** Nutrition Education Requirements

**ITEM:** *Participant Education for Food Instrument Use*

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**Policy** Local agencies shall instruct participants/parents/caretakers on the selection of authorized foods and quantities and on the correct use of WIC food instruments at authorized grocers.

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**Basis For Policy** 7 CFR 246.7 (i) (8), (j)  
7 CFR 246.11 (e) (1-5)  
7 CFR 246.12 (p)  
WIC National Nutrition Services Standards: Standards 17 and 18

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**Enrollment** Local agencies shall instruct participants on the correct use of food instruments at the initial enrollment appointment by providing the participant/parent/guardian with education on the following areas:

- (a) First/last days that the food instruments can be redeemed
  - (b) Where to shop for WIC foods
  - (c) Type of food to buy
  - (d) Quantity of food to buy
  - (e) Procedures at checkout:
    - Separation of WIC foods from other grocery items
    - Where the purchase price is entered, and by whom
    - When and where the food instruments must be signed
  - (f) Procedure to address problems at the grocery store
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**Enrollment  
(Continued)**

For families new to WIC, local agency staff shall issue food instruments at the enrollment appointment for one month only, to provide the opportunity to evaluate the participant/parent/caretaker's knowledge of proper food instrument use. The written or verbal evaluation following their first experience redeeming food instruments shall determine if further education is needed.

Note: This information shall also be reviewed with participants when food instrument abuse is suspected or identified.

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**Reorientation**

Local agencies shall provide annual reorientation education regarding food instrument use for all participants and their alternate(s). The education provided shall cover areas (a) – (f) described above and shall include a written or verbal evaluation component. When an alternate is unable to come to the agency for this instruction, it is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that the alternate(s) can use food instruments correctly. See WPM 270-30 for the definition of an alternate.

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**Food Instrument  
Package Change**

If the food package is changed, local agency staff shall review any new information with the participant/parent/caretaker/alternate to ensure continued understanding of correct food instrument use. See WPM 310-30 for the contents of the different food packages.

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